CHAPTER XV

TRADE[1]

PHILIPPINE COMMERCE

ALTHOUGH Philippine commerce, like the Philippine Government, has gone through three stages of development, it is the modern phase which is the most important. Trade in pre-Spanish days was carried on with neighboring countries, mostly with China, but was irregular in nature. The Spaniards imposed a policy of trade limitations which was detrimental to the Philippines and which was not abolished until the early part of the nineteenth century.

In recent years the Philippines has sold her products in the protected American market and in other markets, and has made purchases in these countries. The trade of the Philippines has totalled more than a half billion pesos annually, and the bulk of that trade has been with the United States. In 1934 it did not reach that figure, for to be exact it amounted to 388,000,000 pesos ($194,000,000) of which 167,000,000 pesos ($83,500,000) represented imports and the remainder of 221,000,000 pesos ($110,500,000) exports. This meant that a balance of trade in favor of the Islands of 54,000,000 pesos ($27,000,000), a comfortable margin, was registered.

[1] This chapter was read by Mr. Cornelio Balmaceda, Director of Commerce. Mr. J. Bartlett Richards, American Trade Commissioner, also checked the figures and statements and offered valuable suggestions. See

Lawrence Benton, *Port of Manila Year Book for 195$,* a narrative and statistical compilation of overseas commerce of the Philippine Islands from 1898 to 1934., and bulletins prepared by Mr. Leon Ma. Gonzales, Chief of the Division of Statistics, Department of Agriculture and Commerce.